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MAIL
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FOR
CHRISTMAS



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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Season 66

Beloved Adhyapya;

Tonight I am going to take up another phase of the Mental Phenomena of Trance. I have deferred discussing the phenomena of Spiritualism until this point, because when one mentions Spiritualism or Communication with Spirits, an untrained reader is very apt to jump to conclusions and possibly imagine that we are agitating Spiritualism or something of that kind. The Brotherhood, as I have told you in previous lessons, does not advocate Communication with the Living Dead, it says that this is inadvisable, useless in many ways; but at the same time laying aside all of the trickery and misrepresentation and deceit found, there is still a basis of Facts which proves that there is something, and it is this "something" which I am going to discuss with you in this lesson, so that, once for all, you may have a clear understanding of what it is, how Communication is brought about, and the difference between the work you are engaged in and ordinary Spiritualism. I believe that this differentiation will be valuable to you, and I want you to study it.

Going on, therefore, where I left off in the previous lecture: First comes the relaxation and abstraction of Consciousness from Mundane things, a withdrawing within. All thought gradually slows down to a stop, even as a fly-wheel slows down when the engine is about to be reversed, and then it starts off again, focussed upon Subjective Thought. It is in order to secure cessation of Conscious Thought that it is necessary to have quietness and darkness while one is doing his concentrating. The part played by Light is very curious, for as you become more sensitive, you become more sensitive to Light, not only upon the eyes, but upon the whole surface of the skin, especially the back of the head and the nape of the neck, and it is doubtless probable that this sensitiveness would be found to extend down the spine, were it not protected by the clothes.

As soon as the necessary slowing down of the Objective Consciousness has taken place, the Subjective Consciousness increases greatly in vividness. The Images in the Imagination become extraordinarily clear-cut and intense. Nevertheless, they are recognizable as being the product of the Image-making Faculty because they can be changed at will. which is not the case with the Images evoked by an Objective Psychic Consciousness. Then comes the dividing of the ways. Up to this point, the different types of Trance are identical. In each one the setting down of brain Consciousness has taken place; now begins the opening up of the Higher Consciousness.

In the case of the Trance of Projection no effort is made to keep open the line of communication with the physical brain, for the more complete the withdrawal, that is to say the deeper the meditation, the more satisfactory the result. I will not take up the Trance of Projection at this time, you have had that before in earlier lessons, and the higher phases involve many problems of the deeper aspects of Occultism which require a working knowledge of Esoteric Science, which comes later.

The study of the Trance of Vision I will also put aside. You have touched upon it in your early lessons, in its elementary form, and to go into it in your lesson now more deeply would lead us too far in Psychology, either Orthodox or Esoteric. So I will limit myself in this lesson to the Psychology of the Trance-Mediumship of the Spiritualist, a third type of Trance, and this is given merely that you may have a clear understanding of what the Trance Medium does, or attempts to do.

If a Medium, having thrown himself into a Trance, proposes neither to project his subtle self nor to make use of Psychic Vision, then still a third course is open to him, and this I will explain in detail, in order that you may have the necessary data and knowledge. The experienced Medium will have certain Spirit-Controls from amongst the Living Dead with whom he is accustomed to get into touch, and it is at this point that he begins the Invocation of his Control. Then the answering Voice formulates itself in Consciousness and a mental conversation is exchanged between the two. If it is intended to establish communication between the two Planes of Existence, and the Spirit-Control desires to communicate with those who may be present with the Medium, the Consciousness of the Medium has, as it were, to put the Communicator thru, or hook-up. The Control utters some phrase which the Medium hears mentally, and instructs the Medium to repeat it aloud. In order to do this the Medium has to re-establish contact with his own dense body. This is an intricate process. As soon as the swoop into space takes place, which is recognized as the sensation caused by the Ego withdrawing from his physical body, the kinaesthetic sense, which indicates the position of the body in space, undergoes a change so that, altho the position of the body upon the couch may remain unaltered, the kinaesthetic sense reports the body upright.

It will thus be perceived that the Medium is now upon the same Plane as the Spirit-Communicator; he, too, has shed his body, altho in his case but temporarily. In order to carry out the Control's instructions and repeat to the Earth Plane the message given him, usually some brief and simple formula of greeting, the Medium proceeds to take control of his own body in just the same way as the Spirit-Communicator does, that is to say he does not re-enter it, slipping in thru the doorway, until the subtle and dense bodies blend limb by limb, as he does when he returns at the end of the Meditation, but he merely establishes a contact with the Throat Centers, by projecting his Will upon them and as it were, giving suggestion to them. With considerable effort the muscles of the larynx are manipulated tho not thru their usual channels. The words are spoken, and immediately Communication is established. Now, it then seems as if in that period the Mind of the Communicating Entity immediately takes over the control of the Throat Centers of the entranced body, and the Medium stands aside. The whole process takes place so swiftly that it is exceedingly difficult to know exactly what happens, and the vital point seems to lie in the Medium's effecting a Control first, which is then taken over by the Communicator.

However, Communication once established, the body of the Medium appears to be used as a telephone by the Communicators from another Plane of Existence. The Control and the Medium seem to have changed places. The Medium is now standing aside and it is the Mind of the Control that is manipulating the brain and nervous system. The Medium is fully Conscious for there is no such thing as loss of Consciousness in Trance, it is only the Memory which is frequently obliterated, like the Memory of a Dream, and nothing but the most intense concentration can keep the Medium from involuntarily slipping back into his body, a single thought concerning the Earth Plane and he is back. All the time he has to think of himself as being on the Inner Planes and disembodied. So habitually do we think of ourselves as embodied and in terms of our physical sensations, that only a Mind that is highly trained in Concentration can inhibit these customary thoughts.

Now, our study of Trance would be incomplete unless we considered the methods of Communication between the Medium and the Communicating Entity on the Inner Plane, when use of the physical organism is not attempted. Thru the Consciousness of the Medium the Communicating Entity appears as a very clear-cut picture seen with the Mind's eye. He visualizes the Mentality which he feels is trying to contact his own.

As soon as he is able to form a clear mental picture of it, the influence of a Presence gives place to the formulation of words heard mentally, he gets a distinct sense of a definite Personality. Now, it is obvious that the Medium cannot really be seeing anything, because the corporeal form of the Communicating Entity has long since mouldered into dust, so that if he saw the actual physical form of the Entity it would have to appear as a skeleton, but instead of this he sees the Communicator as he appeared in Life. It is obvious, therefore, that what he is seeing is that Entity's natural picture of himself communicated to him telepathically. It is the same mechanism which is employed when two living people are trying to communicate telepathically. The Transmitter visualizes as clearly as he can the person with whom he wishes to communicate, and then announces himself by speaking to him. The Receiver, if he is at all sensitive, will frequently have a clear Mental Picture of the Communicator and hear the words he speaks. We may reasonably conclude, therefore, that what takes place between two embodied Minds who try to communicate telepathically also takes place between an embodied and a disembodied Mind when they try to communicate in the same way. The Communicating Entity visualized himself as he was when in the body, the Medium is able to perceive this Thought Form psychically, and it serves as the means of Communication between them. Once this Contact has been established, the Medium is able to get into Psychic Touch with any Spirit-Control whom he knows by visualizing him. It has also been found that by employing the same device Mediums can invoke each other's Control. We may, therefore, disabuse our minds of the idea that Control is the same thing as Obsession, as popularly understood. That is to say that the body of one person is occupied by the Soul of another. What we are dealing with, in this Trance-Mediumship, is the Hypnotic Influence of the Mind of a disembodied Spirit over the Mind of the Medium, and it will be found that the whole of the phenomena of Trance-Mediumship can be explained in the terms of Psychology or Hypnosis.

All Occult Schools depend for their working on their Contacts with those who are known to them as the Masters. Different Schools are in touch with different Masters, and it is the portraits, names, and symbols of these Masters which are among their most carefully guarded secrets. Of course, the Masters are, in a sense, Spirit-Controls of a high type. Those who are familiar with Occult literature will have realized that the Presence we have described is what is known to Occultists as the Master, the Mystics as the Visions of a Saint, Spiritualists as a Control, and is repeatedly described in the Bible as the "Visit of an Angel," such a one as taught the interpretation of Dreams to the Prophet Daniel, and announced her Destiny to the Virgin Mary. It is noteworthy that the Spiritualist, the Occultist, the Mystic, the Prophet, and the Seer all bear witness to such meetings with invisible Visitants from another Plane of Existence, and the fact that the lunatic adds his testimony to the crowd of witnesses need not necessarily invalidate the evidence. At any rate the Source from whence Daniel drew his Power to impress two successive Kings of Babylon, and Joan of Arc her influence over a King of France and his generals, cannot be dismissed as "such stuff as dreams are made of," unless we are prepared to admit that that "stuff" is real in its own sphere. To say that a thing is imaginary is not to dispose of it in the Realm of Mind, where the Imagination, or the Image-making faculty is a very important part of our Mental functioning for Mental Images are potent things; altho they may not actually exist on the Physical Plane, they influence it far more than some suspect.

In the Bonds of the Eternal Brotherhood,

Sri Dayananda, S.C.